



INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
2025-2030
INSTITUTE OF DESIGN
NIRMA UNIVERSITY

Nirma University Institute of Design

Institutional Development Plan of Institute of Design (2025 – 30) Executive Summary

The Institute of Design, established in 2017 under the umbrella of Nirma University, has swiftly emerged as a dynamic centre for design education in India. With its dual focus on Communication Design and Product & Interaction Design, the institute has graduated six batches and currently hosts over 340 students, guided by a blend of full-time and visiting faculty.

This Institutional Development Plan (IDP) articulates a comprehensive roadmap for the institute's growth from 2025 to 2030. It responds to the evolving educational, social, technological, and economic landscape of Ahmedabad and the broader Indian design ecosystem. The plan is driven by the institute's vision to nurture ethical, innovative, and future-ready designers and is rooted in a mission to promote planet-centred design, critical thinking, and sustainable practice. Through environmental assessment, competitive benchmarking at both local and national levels, and a SWOC analysis, the plan identifies key strengths such as a reputed university brand, strong ethical practices, interdisciplinary learning, and vibrant industry engagement.

Benchmarking with institutions of national eminence in design pedagogy and technological innovation, highlights the institute's emerging position; areas for development being, enhancement of specialisation offerings, strengthening industry collaboration, advancing research, and improving infrastructure for experimentation and prototyping.

The strategy outlines for core goals:

- Improve the quality of education through new programmes, global MoUs, infrastructure development, and faculty development.
- Strengthen the research ecosystem by focusing on student and faculty research, patents, and conferences.

- Enhance industry collaboration through internships, alumni networks, and industry-sponsored design projects.
- Enhance institutional visibility through exhibitions, digital presence, and collaborations with premier institutions and industries.

With clear targets-including international 2+2 programmes and faculty development across areas such as design skills, research skills, and professional practice—the plan lays out an actionable timeline extending to 2030. Mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation, and budgetary planning are also incorporated.

This Institutional Development Plan reaffirms the Institute of Design’s commitment to becoming a nationally recognised hub for design education, rooted in innovation, collaboration, and responsible design thinking.

Need of the Institutional Development Plan

The dynamic and evolving landscape of design education - driven by rapid technological advancements, globalisation, and shifting societal needs - necessitates a strategic and forward-looking approach to institutional growth. As a relatively young institute within the ecosystem of Nirma University, the Institute of Design recognises the importance of an Institutional Development Plan (IDP) in charting a structured path for its academic, research, infrastructural, and industry engagement priorities.

The IDP serves as a critical blueprint to guide the Institute in achieving its long-term vision of becoming a nationally recognised hub for design education. It provides a framework for enhancing educational quality, fostering a research-oriented culture, strengthening industry collaborations, and expanding global outreach.

Key reasons for initiating the Institutional Development Plan include:

1. **Structured Growth Trajectory:** To ensure coherent and phased development aligned with the University’s goals and contemporary design education standards.
2. **Strategic Academic Expansion:** To introduce new specialisations and updated curricula that address emerging trends in design and technology, such as AI, AR/VR, and data-driven design.
3. **Enhancing Research and Innovation:** To cultivate a strong research culture among faculty and students, leading to patents, publications, and socially impactful projects.

4. **Strengthening Industry and Global Collaborations:** To build sustainable partnerships with industry, startups, government bodies, and international institutions for internships, collaborative projects, and academic exchange.
5. **Responding to Benchmarking Insights:** To address gaps identified through benchmarking with national and regional design institutions, including improvements in placement systems, internationalisation, and infrastructure.
6. **Accreditation and Ranking Preparedness:** To streamline institutional processes, documentation, and quality standards in preparation for national and international accreditations.

In essence, the Institutional Development Plan is a proactive and strategic response to the evolving educational ecosystem and internal aspirations of the institute. It ensures that the Institute of Design at Nirma University remains competitive, innovative, and impactful in shaping the future of design education in India.

Process of Development of Institutional Development Plan

The development of the Institutional Development Plan (IDP) for the Institute of Design, Nirma University (2025–2030) was carried out through a structured, participatory, and evidence-based approach to ensure inclusivity, relevance, and strategic foresight. The process was spearheaded by the Institutional Development Plan Steering Committee, comprising core faculty members including the Chairperson and Member Secretary, as formally notified in the checklist submitted to the Directorate of Research and Innovation (DRI), Nirma University.

Formation of the Steering Committee:

A formally constituted committee was responsible for steering the development of the Institutional Development Plan (IDP). The committee, comprising a Chairperson, a Member Secretary, and Members, met every week to chalk out the plan in a systematic and collaborative manner.

Stakeholder Consultations:

A series of focused group discussions and feedback sessions were organized to gather insights and expectations from various stakeholders:

Current Students: Separate discussions were held with Communication Design and Product

& Interaction Design students (Semesters IV and VI) to gather feedback on curriculum relevance, infrastructure needs, industry exposure, and academic flexibility.

Alumni: Insights were gathered from multiple batches of alumni to understand their academic experiences, placement gaps, curriculum relevance, and infrastructure improvements.

Industry Recruiters: Feedback from hiring professionals in design-led companies was obtained to evaluate graduate skill readiness and areas for improvement in employability.

Parents: Feedback was compiled regarding infrastructure satisfaction, curriculum exposure, and career preparedness from the parental perspective.

All feedback was systematically compiled in a stakeholder matrix to identify recurring themes and priorities action items for Institutional Development Plan goal development.

Institutional Meetings and Goal Framing:

Several IDP committee meetings were conducted which focused on:

- Reviewing and refining the Vision and Mission of the Institute
- Conducting SWOC Analysis
- Benchmarking with premier and eminent institutions
- Finalising the goals for 2025–2030 and aligning them with infrastructure, research, outreach, and internationalisation strategies.

Document and Policy Analysis:

The planning process also included in-depth review of national and institutional policy frameworks and design-specific reports. The following were referenced:

- National Design Policy of India
- India Design Report (CII)
- NEP 2020
- NITI Aayog policy directions
- NAAC, NIRF, UGC, AICTE quality mandates and innovation schemes

These insights were compiled and analysed to ensure that the Institutional Development Plan is aligned with national priorities, international standards, and future-ready practices in design education.

Guiding Framework:

The planning was guided by the central questions:

- Where are we today?
- Where do we want to reach in the next five years?
- How do we get there?
- How do we know we have reached?

These reflective questions were derived from the university's Institutional Development Plan guide and were instrumental in shaping clear, measurable, and vision-aligned goals.

Environmental Assessment and Analysis: PEST Analysis

Political:

Located in Gujarat, the region benefits from stable governance and investor-friendly policies. Strong government initiatives support higher education and foster innovation across design, technology, and manufacturing. At the national level, the Government of India's National Education Policy (NEP 2020) provides a forward-looking framework that promotes design thinking, innovation, and interdisciplinary education. Internationally, India's participation in global education alliances and knowledge exchange programmes enhances opportunities for international collaboration and academic mobility.

Economic:

Ahmedabad is a major commercial hub in Gujarat, characterised by rapid infrastructure development and expanding economic opportunities. Its strong connectivity enhances access to key urban centres such as Gandhinagar, strengthening regional integration and business engagement. The presence of diverse industries provides ample opportunities for collaboration and meaningful industry exposure for design students. Additionally, proximity to emerging technology parks supports innovation and entrepreneurship.

At the national level, India's expanding design and innovation economy is being supported through initiatives such as Startup India and Make in India, creating new opportunities for young designers. Internationally, global outsourcing and design consulting markets increasingly view India as a hub for cost-effective, high-quality creative services, enhancing both exposure and global competitiveness.

Social:

Ahmedabad is a culturally rich city with a vibrant student community shaped by premier institutions such as National Institute of Design, CEPT University, Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad, IIT Gandhinagar, and Mudra Institute of Communications Ahmedabad. This ecosystem fosters strong cross-cultural and interdisciplinary learning. The city is student-friendly and relatively liberal, offering a safe and supportive environment, including for women students. Its cosmopolitan and entrepreneurial ethos provides both inspiration and opportunity for design practices rooted in business, technology, culture, and tradition. The diverse social fabric further encourages inclusivity and creativity in design education.

The Nirma University campus, located on S.G. Highway, benefits from strategic connectivity between Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar. It is well-served by public transport networks, ensuring ease of access for students and faculty. The surrounding region has witnessed rapid infrastructure development, with strong access to healthcare through several public and private hospitals.

At the national level, India's demographic dividend, characterised by a large youth population, is driving demand for creative education, entrepreneurship, and innovation. Internationally, the growing global recognition of Indian design talent in areas such as UI/UX, industrial design, and communication design is fostering stronger cross-cultural collaborations and academic exchange opportunities.

Technological:

The city has a growing tech ecosystem with expanding IT and manufacturing sectors. Its proximity to IITGN and NID provides access to advanced research. The strong digital infrastructure supports tech-driven learning, and there are numerous opportunities for collaborative projects at the University in IoT, AI, and smart technologies.

Nationally, India's rapid digital transformation, bolstered by initiatives like Digital India, is creating opportunities for design in smart cities, fintech, and e-governance. Internationally, global design and tech industries are increasingly focusing on sustainable design, Industry 4.0, and human-AI collaboration, encouraging Indian institutions to align with international standards and practices.

Developmental Goals

As part of its long-term vision to evolve into a future-ready centre of excellence in design education, the institute has outlined a set of institutional goals and strategies that will guide its growth and development in the coming years. These goals focus on improving the quality of education, strengthening the research ecosystem, deepening industry collaborations, and enhancing institutional visibility. Each goal is designed to align with the broader academic, professional, and societal expectations, while fostering innovation, inclusivity, and impact across all levels of engagement.

Goal 1: Improve Quality of Education

Goal 2: Strengthen Research Ecosystem

Goal 3: Strengthen Industry Collaborations

Goal 4: Enhancing Visibility

List of Strategies for Each Goals

Goal 1 - Improve Quality of Education

1. Internationalisation
2. Develop Infrastructure
3. Improve Faculty-Student Ratio
4. Faculty Development Programme

Goal 2 - Strengthen Research Ecosystem

1. Minor Research Projects by Faculty
2. Product Patents based on Student Projects
3. Student Research Initiatives
4. Faculty Development Programmes
5. Research Papers Faculty each year

Goal 3 - Strengthen Industry Collaborations

1. Placements
2. Alumni Engagement
3. Industry-Sponsored Projects in Curriculum
4. Professional Design Practice for Faculty & Students

5. Faculty Industry Internship/Training

Goal 4 - Enhancing Visibility

1. To enhance Digital & Social Media Presence
2. To organise Public Events & Exhibitions
3. To get memberships in Design Bodies and to attend and participate in their events
4. To enhance outreach activities
5. To participate in Competitions
6. To participate in conferences/Round Table/seminars

Monitoring and Review Mechanisms of the Institutional Development Plan

To ensure the effective implementation and continuous alignment of the Institutional Development Plan with its long-term vision and objectives, a robust monitoring and review mechanism will be put in place. This will involve clearly defined structures, leadership, accountability, and periodic evaluation of progress against set targets.

At the core of this system will be a dedicated Institutional Development Committee chaired by the Director of the Institute, responsible for steering the execution of the IDP. This committee will serve as the central oversight body and will be supported specific sub-committees, each comprising faculty members, administrative staff, and relevant coordinators.

Each sub-committee will be led by a faculty coordinator and will meet fortnightly to track progress, flag challenges, and recalibrate strategies as needed. Reports from these committees will be consolidated and presented at a monthly review meeting chaired by the Director of the Institute.

These monthly meetings will serve as a forum for collective planning, cross-functional updates, and addressing interdependencies between different goals. The Director will ensure that all outcomes are aligned with the timelines, budgets, and institutional vision outlined in the IDP. Clear records will be maintained for each review session, and key decisions will be documented for follow-up action.

In addition to the core committees, existing institutional committees/coordinators such as the Research Coordinator, Admissions Committee, FDP coordinator, etc., will continue to function with enhanced responsibilities tied to the IDP. They will provide specific insights and support in their respective domains—whether it is visibility and admissions, faculty development, or research milestones.

A mid-year review and an annual impact assessment will also be conducted to evaluate whether each target under the five goals has been met. These assessments will feed into future iterations of planning, allowing the institute to remain agile and responsive to emerging opportunities and challenges.

By putting in place a participatory, structured, and transparent monitoring framework, the institute will ensure that the Institutional Development Plan is not only implemented effectively but also evolves meaningfully over time.